

REMARKS

In the present Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to delete the subject matter introduced in the Amendment previously filed on October 6, 2008, and thus is in substantially the same form as presented in the Amendment filed on April 14, 2008. Claims 1-3 have also been amended to further improve their clarity and/or form. Claims 4-7 were previously canceled. No new matter has been added.

Applicants respectfully submit that entry of the amendments, after final, is proper, at least because they place the application either in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal. See M.P.E.P. § 714.12. Upon entry of the Amendment, claims 1-3 and 8-15 will be all of the claims pending in the present application.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for participating a telephonic Interview with Applicants' former representatives in January 2009. During the Interview, it was agreed that none of the cited references teach or suggest a "partitioning" step, as recited in present claim 1.

I. Response to Objection to Claim 1

Claim 1 was objected to for informalities.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 as amended does not contain informalities. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to delete the phrase "copper-depleted" with respect to the first and second organic extraction solutions. Moreover, claim 1 as amended does not contain the objected to ":". Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the objection.

II. Response to Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, First Paragraph

Claims 1-3 and 8-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, for failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants respectfully submit that the present claims as amended are in full compliance with the § 112 requirements.

Specifically, as noted above, sole independent claim 1 has been amended to delete the objected-to phrase "copper-depleted" with respect to the first and second organic extraction solutions. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the § 112 rejection.

III. Conclusion

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order and such action is earnestly solicited. If there are any questions concerning this paper or the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at her earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

Date: March 17, 2009

By: 
Fang Liu, Ph.D.
Registration No. 51283

P.O. Box 1404
Alexandria, VA 22313-1404
703 836 6620